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## Ezetimibe tablets (Ezetrol)

Ezetimibe has been prescribed to help lower your cholesterol levels. Take one 10 mg tablet daily.

Some lifestyle changes will also help to reduce your cholesterol level – eat healthy food, do not smoke, gently increase the exercise you take, and reduce the amount of salt in your diet.

If you develop any unusual muscle aches or pains, contact your doctor for advice as soon as possible.

### About ezetimibe

Type of medicine	A lipid-regulating medicine
Used for	High blood cholesterol
Also called	Ezetrol®; Combination brands: Inegy® (ezetimibe with <a href="#">simvastatin</a> ); Nustendi® (ezetimibe with bempedoic acid)
Available as	Tablets

**Cholesterol** is a type of fat (called a lipid). It is made naturally in your body from the food that you eat. When the concentration of cholesterol in your blood becomes too high, it is called **hypercholesterolaemia**. In people with hypercholesterolaemia, small fatty patches (called atheroma) can develop within the inside lining of their blood vessels. Over time, these patches make blood vessels narrower, and this is called atherosclerosis, or 'hardening of the arteries'. This 'narrowing' reduces the blood flow through the arteries and it increases the risk of a number of heart and blood vessel diseases, such as heart attack and stroke.

Ezetimibe works by reducing the amount of cholesterol you absorb from food. This in turn, reduces your risk of long-term heart and circulation problems. Your treatment will be more successful if you also follow the healthy lifestyle advice given by your doctor.

Ezetimibe is prescribed alongside a cholesterol-lowering diet. In addition, you could also be prescribed another medicine to take which lowers cholesterol, such as a statin medicine called **simvastatin**. There is a brand of ezetimibe available which contains simvastatin in the same tablet - it is called Inegy®. Taking a combination brand like this helps to reduce the total number of tablets you need to take each day.

## Before taking ezetimibe

Some medicines are not suitable for people with certain conditions, and sometimes a medicine can only be used if extra care is taken. For these reasons, before you start taking ezetimibe it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant, trying for a baby, or breastfeeding.
- If you have any problems with the way your liver works.
- If you are taking any other medicines. This includes any medicines you are taking which are available to buy without a prescription, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.

## How to take ezetimibe

- Before you start the treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. It will give you more information about ezetimibe and it will also provide you with a full list of the side-effects which you could experience from taking it.
- Take ezetimibe exactly as your doctor tells you to. You will be prescribed one 10 mg tablet to take every day. You can take the tablet at whatever time of day you find easiest to remember, but do try to take your doses at about the same time of day each day. This will help you to remember to take the tablets regularly.
- Swallow the tablet with a drink of water. You can take ezetimibe either with or without food.
- If you forget to take a dose, take one as soon as you remember. If you do not remember until the following day, leave out the forgotten dose from the previous day and take the dose that is due as normal. Do not take two doses on the same day to make up for a missed dose.

## Getting the most from your treatment

- Try to keep your regular appointments with your doctor. This is so your doctor can check on your progress. You may need to have regular blood tests to see how well you are responding to the treatment, and also to check that your liver stays healthy.
- Your doctor will give you advice about eating a healthy diet, avoiding drinking too much alcohol, reducing the amount of salt in your diet, stopping smoking, and taking regular exercise. Following this advice will also help you to reduce your risk of developing heart and blood vessel disease.
- People with high cholesterol do not usually feel unwell, but it is still important that you take ezetimibe regularly every day. Treatment is usually long-term unless you experience an adverse effect, so continue to take the tablets unless you are advised otherwise by your doctor.

## Can ezetimibe cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. The table below contains some of the most common ones associated with ezetimibe. The best place to find a full list of the side-effects which can be associated with your medicine, is from the manufacturer's printed information leaflet supplied with the medicine. Alternatively, you can find an example of a manufacturer's information leaflet in the reference section below. Speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following continue or become troublesome.

<b>Common ezetimibe side-effects (these affect fewer than 1 in 10 people)</b>	<b>What can I do if I experience this?</b>
Diarrhoea, tummy (abdominal) pain, excess wind (flatulence)	Drink plenty of water to replace any lost fluids. Speak with your doctor if this continues
Feeling tired	Do not drive and do not use tools or machines while affected
<b>If you are taking a statin medicine alongside ezetimibe, you could also experience ...</b>	<b>What can I do if I experience this?</b>
Headache	Drink plenty of water and ask your pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the headache continues, speak with your doctor
Muscle pain	Although this may not be anything to be concerned about, you should still tell your doctor about it. This is because there is a rare but serious side-effect which causes a severe form of muscle inflammation
Changes to some blood tests	Your doctor will check for this

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to the tablets, speak with your doctor or pharmacist for further advice.

## How to store ezetimibe

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.

# Important information about all medicines

Never take more than the prescribed dose. If you suspect that you or someone else might have taken an overdose of this medicine, go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital. Take the container with you, even if it is empty.

If you buy any medicines, check with a pharmacist that they are safe to take with your prescribed medicines.

If you are having an operation or any dental treatment, tell the person carrying out the treatment which medicines you are taking.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine, ask your pharmacist.

If you experience side effects, you can report them online through the [Yellow Card website](#).

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## Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Ezetrol® 10 mg Tablets](#); Organon Pharma (UK) Limited, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated April 2022.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 87th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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